"We always tell kids not to tattle, but when you are seeing someone hurt and you get help for them, that is not tattling — that is helping, and there's a difference," Harvey said.

In his presentations, Harvey emphasizes the idea that where bullying is concerned, students are either part of the problem or part of the solution — there's no in-between. When students stand by and ignore it or laugh at it, they are further hurting the victim, he said.

"But, if you take that kid to the counselor's office, tell a teacher or adult or tell the bully to stop, then you are speaking value to that victim and being part of the solution," Harvey said.

But, in a culture where technology dominates the social arena students live in, a disconnect seems to have formed in how they perceive the world around them and other people in it.

Dr. Dan Florell, a psychology professor at Eastern Kentucky University, said there can be a delay in empathy development in children today. Because they interact with peers online and through text messages, they don't make the connection between words and emotions the way they would learn when speaking to someone face to face. At a bullying symposium conducted at EKU in March, he explained to participants how people learn empathy by seeing how their words and actions emotionally affect another person. When they do or say something careless or hurtful, they can see the pain in the other person's facial and physical reaction — you don't get any of that in an online or text interaction. This lack of empathy can affect the development of bullies, who don't register a level of empathy with those they are hurting, and with bystanders, who don't feel an emotional drive to get involved in hurtful scenarios they see unfolding before them.

"I think the culture of the Internet allows people to watch things," Harvey agreed. "Our kids are used to watching things and not used to doing something about it. They click to the next video and they don't make the connection between watching things happen in real life and watching it on the Internet. They go on to the next event in real life, much like on the computer."

PHOTO BY JIM ROBERTSON

> *Statistics show that 66 percent of school shooters who survived the shooting incident cited bullying as a cause.*

THE GREATER THREAT

When a student becomes the target of bullying — which Olweus defines as a person being exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons — he or she can suffer numerous consequences. Apart from embarrassment, these include psychological and physical stress, frequent absences, low self esteem and depression. These consequences potentially can lead to victims committing suicide. But a handful of chronic victims make the leap from suicidal to homicidal thoughts. School shootings have made headlines across the country for decades, with two of the most widely known incidents being at Heath High School in Paducah (1997) and Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. (1999).

"Our bullies cause issues, but our victims are making headlines," Harvey said of these devastating effects of bullying.

Harvey's teaching philosophy takes the main focus off of bullies and places it on the victims, whom he says are the greatest threats to our schools. Statistics show that 66 percent of school shooters who survived the shooting incident cited bullying as a cause. And, even those who didn't survive, like Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, we know were bullied at Columbine, Harvey said.

"If two-thirds of them are acting out in this way, that tells us that we need to focus on the victim and get them the help they need so they don't make horrible decisions like suicide or homicide," Harvey said.

For schools with a school resource officer, if they are not recognizing the victims in their school, they may be missing the greatest threat to the school. Bullycide and school shootings related to bullying are preventable — but it is prevented months or sometimes years before it happens, Harvey said.

"The SRO will be able to see that kid who doesn't fit in," Harvey explained. "I haven't met an SRO yet who can't point to a kid and say, 'That kid I watch because I see him as a threat.' Well, don't just watch, invest in him and prevent this. Don't just be ready for it when it happens; try to prevent it from happening.

"Happy, well adjusted, loved kids don't generally shoot up schools," he continued. "It's the kid who feels like nobody's listening, no one cares — I've got nothing to lose and I'm going to go out making a point. They are speaking in these actions saying, 'I've had enough,' and in their 12- to 16-year-old minds they couldn't come up >>